

**Savitt Medical Library**  
**University of Nevada School of Medicine**  
**Nevada Go Local Proposal**

**Background**

The health of the citizens of Nevada could be improved by the wide and easy availability of quality consumer health information. Nevada is the fastest growing state in the union. In addition it presents a variety of unique characteristics which distinguish it from its neighbors and from virtually any other state. While its growth rate is remarkable, Nevada starts from a fairly low population base. The population in 2000 was just under 2 million. That is expected to have increased to 2.4 million by the end of 2004. This constitutes an astounding 20% increase in population in less than 5 years.

There are several unusual aspects to this increase. One is that it is very unevenly distributed. Most of the increase is taking place in Clark County (Las Vegas/Henderson) and in Washoe County (Reno/Sparks). Las Vegas is the fastest growing metropolitan area in the nation and contains 70% of the state's people. The second unique characteristic of Nevada's population is that it is concentrated in several urban counties (88.4% in Clark, Washoe, and Carson City), while the remainder of the population resides in rural or frontier counties (11.6% in the other 14 counties). The later population is spread over 95,763 square miles, or 87% of the state's land mass. Even though the proportion of the population living in the rural and frontier areas will decline as a percentage of the whole, it will grow in absolute numbers by 13.7% through the year 2014.

The Nevada Office of Rural Health uses the Frontier Education Center definition of "frontier counties." This considers population density – fewer than 7 persons per square mile – and distance to tertiary health care services in terms of time and mileage. Under this definition Nevada has 13 frontier, 1 rural, and 3 urban counties. The state's tertiary care centers and most health resources are located in the three urban counties. A number of acute care hospital services, clinics and medical centers, and emergency medical services scattered across the state's rural and frontier counties provide most of the basic health care received by the populations living there. The average distance between the acute care hospitals in these communities and the next level of care is 121 miles.

Several minorities are represented in the state of Nevada in numbers that exceed their percentage of the national population. The largest such group is Hispanics or Latinos at 19.7% in 2000. They are even more heavily represented in the urban counties where they make 25% of the population in some areas. American Indians comprise 1.3% of the population and are mostly members of one of three tribes: Washoe, Paiute, or Shoshone.

There are approximately 30 tribal areas across the state. Asians comprise 4.5% of Nevada's population.

A final consideration which paints the picture of health care demographics and geography in Nevada is that several areas of the state and adjoining states are logically linked across state lines. Several communities in northeastern California and around Lake Tahoe look to the Nevada side of the border for the closest tertiary health facilities. In northeastern Nevada the closest center for higher level care is Salt Lake City, Utah. In the southeastern part of the state the population is likely to look toward St. George, Utah, as well as the Las Vegas area as the nearest source of more in-depth health services.

All of these factors contribute to the importance of providing quality consumer health information to the citizens of Nevada. Doing so using the internet seems a reasonable approach given the low population density in some areas, high population of new-comers in others, and the distances involved. Further, internet use by percentage of the state population age 3 and older is between 53.2 and 57.9 percent. This is quite comparable to usage estimates for the state of California, but somewhat lower than usage in other neighboring states.

The two largest health sciences libraries in the state will work together to create the Nevada Go Local component of MedlinePlus. These are the Savitt Medical Library of the University of Nevada School Of Medicine in Reno, and the Health Science Library of the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District. The Savitt Medical Library, as the Resource Library for Nevada and the only academic health sciences library in the state, will lead the project. The partners will actively involve other medical and hospital libraries in the state through the network provided by the existing Nevada Medical Library Group. Members of the Nevada Medical Library Group and the State Library are aware of our plans to submit a proposal for a state-wide Go Local project.

Other organizations that will be engaged to support the Go Local effort will include the Nevada Office of Rural Health, the Area Health Education Centers of northern and southern Nevada, and the Nevada Rural Hospital Flex Program. Contacts will also be made with the Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada and the Indian Health Service. Given the already large and growing Hispanic population, especially in the urban counties, every effort will be made to identify and include Spanish language resources through contacts with organizations such as Latinos Unidos Celebrando Salud serving these communities. We will seek involvement in the form of input and promotion by the University of Nevada Las Vegas, Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine, the University of Southern Nevada College of Pharmacy, the Community College of Southern Nevada, Truckee Meadows Community College, Great Basin College in Elko, and any other educational institution in the state having healthcare related programs. All professional societies and organizations will also be contacted, as will all library organizations in the state.

## **Nevada Go Local Proposal**

The Savitt Medical Library (SML) proposes to implement a state-wide Nevada Go Local project in partnership with the Las Vegas-Clark County Library District's Health Science Library (HSL) using the NLM hosted Go Local system. The SML will lead the project and provide the project director and technical support.

There is no pre-existing statewide health-related database or web site upon which to build, nor will any separate site be created specifically for the purposes of this project. The project will take full advantage of the system that NLM has put in place to support Go Local projects and to keep vocabulary and links to MedlinePlus up to date. Indexing will be done by both subject and geographically and will utilize the Go Local controlled vocabulary. Records will include both attribution and date information. Original services will be kept up to date, and new services will be added as discovered. Nevada plans to use the NLM selection guidelines but we will need to decide about organizations without web sites and individual practitioners once the whole project team is in place.

Once implemented, extensive linking from other web sites, such as the University of Nevada School of Medicine web site, to MedlinePlus and the Nevada Go Local system will be created. Similar linking will be encouraged from multiple sites maintained by members of the Nevada Medical Library Group and by other groups and organizations with an interest in the health of the citizens of Nevada.

The SML and HSL will seek broad input from the healthcare community to identify potential web sites for inclusion in the Nevada Go Local project. The project partners will be responsible for collecting and organizing local services web sites, keeping the links current, and working with community and professional organizations in the state and across certain border areas to encourage use and participation.

## **Institutional Support**

Institutional support for the Nevada Go Local project will be provided by the Savitt Medical Library which is the resource library for the state and has been actively involved in outreach for a number of years. The director of the library is also responsible for overseeing the academic information technology services of the School of Medicine. Specifically, the library will provide the equivalent of a .5 FTE position to direct the project, plus other in-kind contributions and support as needed. Technical infrastructure and support will be readily available due to the close linkages of the library and the information technology organization.

## **Local Resources**

The project plan is to divide the work of identifying and collecting information on health services in Nevada between north and south. The Savitt Medical Library will concentrate on the northern half of the state and the cross border areas. The Health Science Library of the Las Vegas – Clark County Library District will handle the southern part of the state. The partners will seek wide input in terms of nominating sites from a broad range

of entities as listed above. Health services sites will include health departments, community health services and clinics, hospitals and medical centers, acute and emergency medical services, Indian Health Services clinics, medical practitioners, libraries, local chapters of health-related organizations, providers of health education, and any other appropriate health or wellness services available.

Our first priority will be to enter the state's tertiary care centers as well as acute care hospital services, clinics and medical centers, and emergency medical services scattered across the state's rural and frontier counties. We will also address the top ten concerns identified in Healthy People Nevada 2010.

## **Timeline**

- March 2005:

Develop plan of action by Savitt Medical Library and Health Science Library, Las Vegas – Clark County. Become familiar with the input system, and develop training materials. Develop guidelines for content inclusion and data entry. Apply for NN/LM funding.

- April 2005:

Train Selectors in Reno and Las Vegas

- May 2005 – July 2005:

When NN/LM funding is approved, hire temporary help from Public Health Schools at University of Nevada, Reno and University of Nevada Las Vegas. Publicize project to library and other potential voluntary contributors. Train temporary staff.

- August 2005 – December 2006:

Data collection and entry; testing

January 2006: Let NLM know ready for testing, continue data entry

- February 2006:

Introduce production version of Nevada Go Local; begin promotion of site to end-users

- October – November 2006:

Evaluation

## **Staffing**

A salaried project director, NAME, will be provided by permanent fulltime staff in the Technical Services department of the Savitt Medical Library at the University of Nevada School of Medicine. The collection, creation, indexing and maintenance of entries will be done by part-time public health students hired and trained for this project in Reno and Las Vegas. They will be supervised by the project director in Reno and by the Health Science Librarian in Las Vegas. Project director will set up (and deactivate) user accounts, and handle customizations including the Featured Site.

## **Customer Service**

Customer service for the site will be provided through the existing Help Desk structure operated by the SML.

## **Hardware/Software/Website**

SML in Reno and HSL in Las Vegas will provide computer workstations for use by project staff. All staff computers are networked and have Internet access. NevadaNet, the statewide network operated by System Computing Services of the University and Community College System of Nevada, will provide reliable connectivity. Any in-depth support that may be required with hardware or software will be provided by Information Technology staff at the Savitt Medical Library. On-site assistance with routine problems will also be available in Las Vegas. Should any greater level of support be required in Las Vegas it will be provided either remotely, or by IT staff sent from Reno. School of Medicine staff is present in Las Vegas at University of Nevada School of Medicine teaching and clinical sites, and regularly travel to Las Vegas from Reno.

Reports from NLM of broken links will be handled by the SML staff weekly.

## **Promotion**

The project will utilize existing means to invite participation and to publicize Nevada Go Local. These will include listservs, such as that of the Nevada Medical Library Group, and contacts developed by the two partner institutions. Promotion of Nevada Go Local will use multiple additional means, including working through the state's public libraries and the State Library. A presentation will be submitted for the Nevada Library Association annual program. The SML will set up and maintain email lists specifically for the purpose of this project. The use of press releases in local newspapers and other media outlets across the state will help get the word to the public. Model publicity pieces such as posters and handouts will be developed for use by any organization, including public and hospital libraries, wishing to further promote Nevada Go Local. Project and other staff of the partner libraries will include information about MedlinePlus and Nevada Go Local in presentations and workshops wherever they are given, and will use a "train the trainers" model with hospital and public librarians to expand the network of those who can spread the word.

## **Evaluation and sustainability**

Before release, we will evaluate the site using the NLM test scenarios. Once released, we will monitor usage and customer feedback to identify strengths and weaknesses of Go Local Nevada. We will also complete the annual NLM self-assessment.

The Savitt Medical Library is committed to sustaining Nevada Go Local. Database records will be maintained regularly, as indicated on the checklist. We will supplement our efforts with volunteers from public libraries and seek additional funding from state library agencies and private foundations if necessary.

## **Reporting**

We will submit reports quarterly as required.

Date of Submittal: March 4, 2005

## **Contacts for Further Information:**

Name

Savitt Medical Library and School of Medicine Information Services

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Pennington Medical Education Building

Reno, NV 89557-0046

Voice:

Email:

Name

Health Science Library Department Head

West Charleston Library

Las Vegas – Clark County Library District

6301 W. Charleston Blvd.

Las Vegas, NV 89146

Voice:

Email:

## **Accompanying materials**

Letter of agreement to support from Savitt Medical Library and School of Medicine

Information Services, University of Nevada School of Medicine

Letters of cooperation from West Charleston Library, Las Vegas – Clark County Library District

Resumes of two project staff named in the proposal

Letter of support from state health department

Letter of support from Nevada Office of Rural Health and other major stakeholders

Completed proposal checklist for NLM-hosted go local system

Narrative request for NN/LM Go Local funding

Budget with narrative for NN/LM funding